

including advocating for veterans, farmers, and seniors.

Wisconsin veterans have a terrific ally in Congressman OBEY, who has stood up for better funding and facilities for our veterans time and again. I have been so pleased to work with him to open new veterans' health clinics, push for more vet centers, and fight for the best possible care for those men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Congressman OBEY has also worked tirelessly on behalf of the farmers of our State. He has fought for country-of-origin labeling and other issues critical to ginseng farmers, worked for emergency appropriations funding for direct payments to help shore up the safety net for dairy farmers in tough times, and pushed to create, extend and improve the Milk Income Loss Contract, MILC, Program. Those are just a few of the many things he has done for Wisconsin's farmers, and I was proud to join him in those efforts.

He is also a determined advocate for our seniors, and was a critical member of our effort to save the SeniorCare Program in both 2007 and 2009. Congressman OBEY also has a long and distinguished record on a host of other issues. He is committed to strengthening public education, improving our health care system, and a longtime advocate for political and congressional reforms.

There are so many things he has accomplished, and so many reasons he will be missed. I want to take this opportunity to recognize Congressman OBEY's outstanding service in the other body. I wish him all the best, and I thank him for his dedicated work for the people of Wisconsin and for every American.

RECOVERY OF SNOWBOARDER KEVIN PEARCE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Kevin Pearce has been recognized as one of the best athletes that Vermont has produced. Like all Vermonters, Marcelle and I hold him in our prayers and thoughts after a devastating snowboarding accident while preparing for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

We have heard reports from his parents, Simon and Pia, about his recovery and like all Vermonters, and so many other Americans, we are so thankful he is back home and progressing every day in his recovery.

I watched Kevin's interview with Tom Brokaw on "The Today Show" and he discussed how well he was doing with Tom. I also wanted my fellow Senators to see the article about him in The New York Times and ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD that article at the completion of my remarks. I can only imagine how much Kevin enjoys being home with his parents and his brothers and how much we all appreciate his tremendous courage and abilities.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, May 3, 2010]

"NO PLACE LIKE THIS FOR SOOTHING CARE"

(By John Branch)

NORWICH, VT.—The renovated barn next to the family house was always one of Kevin Pearce's favorite places. There is a skateboard ramp out back and a giant recreation room inside, with three loftlike bedrooms above.

But Pearce, 22, did not move into the barn until he was a teenager, and soon he was off to snowboarding schools and then on the worldwide circuit. Home, and his room in the barn, became just somewhere to get away for a day or two.

Now it is the ultimate destination.

More than four months after sustaining a traumatic brain injury during a training accident, after missing the Olympics and living in hospitals in Utah and Colorado, Pearce has returned, indefinitely.

"It's the best thing ever," Pearce said Monday, sitting on a living room sofa while holding hands with his mother, Pia. Handwritten "welcome home" posters, balloons and streamers hung about the house. "There's nothing I could think of that's any better than coming back home."

And for a moment or two, it was easy to imagine that nothing extraordinary had happened to Kevin Pearce at all. He laughed with his family. He talked about snowboarding. He discussed the Olympics. He smiled, big as ever.

"Things feel very normal to me," Pearce said.

The past few months, much of which Pearce does not remember, have been anything but normal. On Dec. 31, Pearce, a rising rival to Shaun White who was expected to make the United States Olympic halfpipe team and compete for a medal, fell and hit his head (he was wearing a helmet) while practicing a trick in Park City, Utah.

A helicopter flew Pearce, unconscious, to the University of Utah Hospital in nearby Salt Lake City. The front half of his shoulder-length hair was shaved so the recesses of his brain could be drained of fluid. His family was summoned immediately. Painful questions about whether he would live slowly gave way to uneasy ones about how his life would be.

This is how, for now, Pearce walks without assistance, a little gingerly but sturdily enough to navigate the stairs to the familiar bedroom in the barn. He looks a little different now, too. His hair, after being shaved to one length, has grown back to the top of his ears. He wears bold, dark-rimmed Oakley Frogskin frames with prismlike lenses. The vision in each eye is fine, but the eyes themselves are a bit out of sync, not quite tracking together.

"My eyes are a little sketchy," he said. "But they're better than they used to be. They used to be scary blurry."

Pearce says he does not remember the accident. He does not remember much from the weeks before the injury, including Christmas at home. He remembers nothing after the injury until the first week of February, when he was flown from Utah to Craig Hospital, a brain and spinal cord rehabilitation center near Denver.

He does remember watching White win the Olympic gold medal. Scotty Lago, a good friend of Pearce's who had had far less big-event success, won bronze. It was tough, Pearce admitted.

But there is no memory of the moment when he learned just how severe his injury was.

"I never felt sorry for myself," Pearce said. "This is kind of what I signed up for when I started snowboarding."

He vows that he will snowboard again.

"Obviously, I won't be doing all the things I was doing," Pearce said. "Hopefully, I can still do some of the tricks."

Pearce's promising comeback has not included a recalculation of his long-range ambitions. His family is consciously keeping him concentrated on the here and now.

"There is little use thinking about the past, what could have been, or what may be in the future," Simon Pearce, his father, said. "He has stayed focused on the present moment. And it feels like it is working."

For months, Pearce has undergone rehabilitation and therapy, both mental and physical, often for six or more hours a day. More recently, he went to a Denver-area gym, too, riding stationary bikes and playing basketball. He left only after making at least 7 of 10 free throws. That sort of therapy will continue at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in nearby Lebanon, N.H., and at a local athletic club. Pearce's rehabilitation continues to focus on vision, balance and memory.

Pearce cannot fully appreciate how far he has come, however often he watches videos that his family shot of him in the hospital in January. But his parents and three older brothers—Andrew (28), Adam (25) and David (24)—are still amazed.

That hit home when the traveling party—Kevin, Adam, their parents and their snowboarding friend Jack Mittrani—arrived at the airport in Boston. Pearce walked through the airport and carried his own bag.

They arrived at the family home about 9 p.m. Saturday. About 30 friends and family members greeted them with cheers, hugs and a few tears.

On Sunday, after a short hike up Gile Mountain, the family gathered for supper. It was a rare reunion. Simon and Pia generally alternated trips out West. Andrew, a manager for the glass-blowing company founded by Simon Pearce, went back and forth, too. Adam left his job as a snowboarding instructor in Utah and has barely left Kevin's side, even moving back to the barn. (Among other things, Adam provided updates on a get-well Facebook page for more than 48,000 fans.) David, who has Down syndrome and has long provided perspective and inspiration, mostly stayed in Vermont and worked for the family business.

But one horrific accident, and one celebratory homecoming, brought them together again.

"Sitting at the table, for me, was a big thing," Pia Pearce said. "Wow, here we are, back at our round table, sitting together."

On Monday afternoon, everything seemed normal. Kevin Pearce, after taking a nap in his old bedroom in the barn, was sitting in the grass out front with the snowboarder Ellery Hollingsworth. The sun was shining. Pearce was smiling.

Yes, it was good to be home. Awfully good.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am delighted to recognize the Dossin Great Lakes Museum as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. This institution has graced the shores of Belle Isle, MI, since 1960, when the Dossin family generously helped to transform the deteriorating Maritime Museum into an enduring tribute to the Great Lakes. For